

I CLAIM

1. An ultraviolet sterilization apparatus comprising a housing and a replaceable lamp cartridge containing at least one ultraviolet lamp, said housing including an opening for the inlet of an air flow to be sterilized and an opening for the outlet of the sterilized air flow, means being provided for generating said air flow,

characterized in that said means for generating said air flow are located inside said housing and said cartridge is a disposable component comprising an envelope formed with a reflecting inner surface and two openings for the entry and exit of said air flow, at least one of said openings being provided with means that allow the passage of the air but stops the UV germicidal radiation emitted by said lamp(s).

2. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said housing provides for an aperture into which at least a portion of said lamp cartridge is inserted.

3. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cartridge is applied as a cantilever cartridge thanks to an articulated joint into which said cartridge is fitted, such joint allowing a partial rotation of said cartridge.

4. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein both said end openings of said lamp cartridge are provided with means that allow the passage of the air but stops the germicidal radiation, each one of said means being selected from a dark filter, an activated charcoal filter, an optic labyrinth.

5. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said housing further contains a coarse dust filter forming a wall of said housing, and in that said means for generating an air flow comprises at least one fan interposed between said dust filter and said cartridge.

6. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said housing is a supporting frame incorporating means for fixing said apparatus to a wall.

7. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cartridge envelope is of a material selected from plastics, cardboard, wood, the inner surface of which is covered or lined by a reflecting film of aluminum.

8. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said housing further incorporates an arrangement for securing said cartridge, and that said cartridge envelope comprises a plurality of electric contacts for the UV lamp(s) disposed inside said envelope.

9. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said housing incorporates a power supply for feeding the apparatus, and a control circuitry realized with one or more electronic cards, and that said housing incorporates control and adjustment buttons, and a display showing the operating hours of said cartridge.

10. A sterilization apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a magnetized strip secured to the inner bottom surface of the housing and cooperating with a metal strip on said cartridge surface to secure the coupling between the housing and the cartridge, and that a flat panel adapted to carry an advertising message is visible when this latter is fitted within said housing.